

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Dewberry & Davis - Project Impact National Partner

Dewberry & Davis' contribution to Project Impact takes our existing experience and knowledge of national programs, policy, and training and focuses them on providing community education and awareness of hazards and mitigation alternatives. Dewberry & Davis has provided FEMA with outstanding service on numerous Federal contracts as part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), the Technical Assistance Contract for disaster services (PaRR, NISTAC), and the Hazard Mitigation Technical Assistance Contract (HMTAC). This process of national-to-community information rollout will be delivered through various initiatives, conference seminars and workshops, and programs described in this document.

The Disaster and Mitigation Services Team will lead and coordinate Dewberry & Davis' Project Impact efforts. The team has over 25 years of proven experience administering Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to disaster and mitigation programs. Helping communities become aware and focus on Project Impact will be a natural extension of the existing work performed by the team.



Debris Management and the Local Community

Dewberry & Davis has been an advisor to FEMA for several years on the debris management issue and is one of the nation's most recognized experts in the field. Communities can benefit greatly from the information and expertise that we can provide, regardless of the amount of training and preparation already underway.

Dewberry & Davis has already performed one Debris Management seminar in Charleston, S.C. and is offering them to people working in emergency management, public works and solid waste organizations at the local level. The seminar fits well with FEMA's Project Impact initiative because it can help communities improve preparations, thereby speeding recovery and reducing costs of a disaster.

Dewberry & Davis and the Information Superhighway

Let's use the Information Superhighway to our advantage. The internet can be the easiest way to reach the largest number of people, in the shortest amount of time, at their convenience. Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) serves as an integral part of the disaster mitigation strategy for nearly every community where flooding is a primary hazard.

Over the past year, Dewberry & Davis has created our own website that provides valuable information to the public about the NFIP. Dewberry & Davis can add links to FEMA's Project Impact site as well. And that's just the start. We can add a Project Impact section to our own website; many of our presentations and guidance sheets can be posted on our website for the public, which would be especially beneficial to those in remote areas, to self-educate themselves at home.



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A New Mitigation Effort to Reduce Tree Debris

Dewberry & Davis' experience in debris management planning has highlighted the significant impact of airborne debris in certain natural disasters. When a catastrophic disaster such as a Category 4 hurricane strikes a major metropolitan center, it can produce in excess of 15 million cubic yards of debris. Trees and vegetation account for approximately 30% of this volume.

Collateral effects of debris include an increased threat to life, hindrance to life-saving or other clean-up activities, power outages, and personal and public property damage. Large volumes of woody debris will exacerbate the already overwhelmed resources of a community and slow down the short and long term, financial recovery process. Low-cost mitigation and maintenance programs have been identified to reduce the volume, type and impact of debris. Dewberry & Davis intends to incorporate the

information and guidance into all debris plans we write. Furthermore, Dewberry & Davis will provide information brochures at national conferences such as the National Hurricane Conference and the International Association of Emergency Managers. Additionally, we will continue promoting community awareness training through local Chapter meetings of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), American Public Works Association (APWA), and the solid waste management industry. We have already developed brochures and continue to add to our repertoire of informational handouts.

National Conferences

Dewberry & Davis participates in national conferences giving presentations related to floodplain management, the NFIP, and debris management planning. All of these topics are key components of nearly all community disaster mitigation strategies where flooding, the most common type of disaster, is a primary hazard. Moreover, debris management planning is an aspect of mitigation that can be applied across the board for all disasters.

Dewberry & Davis will promote Project Impact at national conferences we attend, providing information, literature and personal endorsement. Perhaps the greatest benefit to be derived from conferences is the personal testimony and recommendations of disaster-experienced people. Conferences are also ideal venues in which to distribute guidance documents, educational materials and presentations.



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Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HI&RA) is generally conducted in two steps. The first step, Hazard Identification, consists of determining what natural hazards threaten a community and which areas in the community are at the greatest risk. The second step, Risk Assessment, generally consists of determining what facilities are at risk from natural hazards and estimating the potential losses from a disaster. These steps are critical before moving to the next phase of prioritizing mitigation actions.



Given the technical aspects of HI&RA, new Project Impact communities could benefit from a training course on HI&RA. Dewberry & Davis is well suited to participate as a Project Impact partner in the area of HI&RA by providing this training to Project Impact communities; for example, we will conduct HI&RA training in the District of Columbia. The attendees will learn the overall HI&RA process, including how to conduct HI&RA tasks, where to obtain data to perform the analyses, and how to apply the results. In addition, the course will provide a discussion on applying GIS to the HI&RA process. The skills taught in the class will benefit community officials and Project Impact partners that will be conducting or overseeing the HI&RA activities.



Adopt a Community

Dewberry & Davis would like to “adopt” several Project Impact communities. Dewberry & Davis will provide guidance, training and technical assistance on mitigation issues in our areas of expertise: water resources, floodplain management, GIS, hazard identification and risk assessment. Dewberry & Davis staff will also participate in Project Impact meetings held by the selected communities.

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Mitigation Planning

Local communities reach out for training and assistance as they embrace and implement the Project Impact concepts. Most notable among these are how to initiate and conduct the mitigation planning process and how to identify and evaluate hazard mitigation strategies.

Dewberry & Davis combined our hazard mitigation strategy expertise with FEMA Region V's mitigation planning expertise during Region V's annual Project Impact Community Mentoring Meetings held November 9 and 10, 1999, with representation of twelve Project Impact communities. Currently, community-mentoring ac-

tivities are provided during the regular Project Impact Community, State, and FEMA Points of Contacts meetings held in Region V offices. Expansion of these information exchange and mentoring sessions to focus on mitigation planning and hazard mitigation strategies will help new Project Impact communities initiate their efforts, and will help existing Project Impact communities refine their efforts. Dewberry & Davis is looking to expand this training to additional regions.

Community Assessment

Dewberry & Davis has already worked with the cities of Roanoke, VA and Charlotte, NC, in addition to the Town of Boone, NC, performing Project Impact related services including public meeting facilitations, all hazards planning, flood audits, and other grant application package support, and stormwater management assessments. These communities were historically prone to significant and damaging flooding. As a result of these efforts, future multi-jurisdictional projects were identified that will lessen existing problems and minimize future increases in flooding. Such measures included culvert/bridge improvements, stream crossing improvements, channel stabilization, and stormwater/flood control projects, as well as emergency planning and operational program changes to improve community preparedness and response. Moreover, Dewberry & Davis provided training on model uses as well as use of data in digital format (ARC/INFO GIS) for future use and enhancement by the local government or Regional Authorities.

